



DID THE PARDON COME TOO LATE?

MAUD BALLINGTON BOOTH

Attractive Booklets.



Bound in board covers, decorated with delicately shaded colors of ink. Illustrated.

12mo,

EACH, POSTPAID, 30 CENTS.

BY THE DOZEN, POSTPAID, \$3.00.

Comfort Pease and Her Gold Ring. By Mary E. Wilkins.

A Day's Time Table. By E. S. Elliott, author of "Expectation Corner."

A Wastrel Redeemed. By David Lyall.

My Little Boy Blue. By Rosa N. Carey.

The Swiss Guide. An Allegory. By C. H. Parkhurst, D.D.

Brother Lawrence. The Practice of the Presence of God.

The Baritone's Parish; or, "All Things to All Men." By J. M. Ludlow, DD., author of "The Captain of the Janizaries."

Reliques of the Christ. A Poem. By Denis Wortman, D.D. *New edition.*

One of the Sweet Old Chapters. By Rose Porter.

Where Kitty Found Her Soul. By Mrs. J. H. Walworth.

Child Culture; or, The Science of Motherhood. By Hannah Whitall Smith, author of "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life."

Risen with Christ; or, The Resurrection of Christ and of the Believer. By A. J. Gordon, D.D.

Fleming H. Revell Company

NEW YORK: 112 Fifth Ave.

CHICAGO: 63 Washington St.

TORONTO: 140 & 142 Yonge St.

Did the Perdon

1911-1912

1913-1914

1915-1916

1917-1918

1919-1920

1921-1922

1923-1924

1925-1926

1927-1928

1929-1930

1931-1932

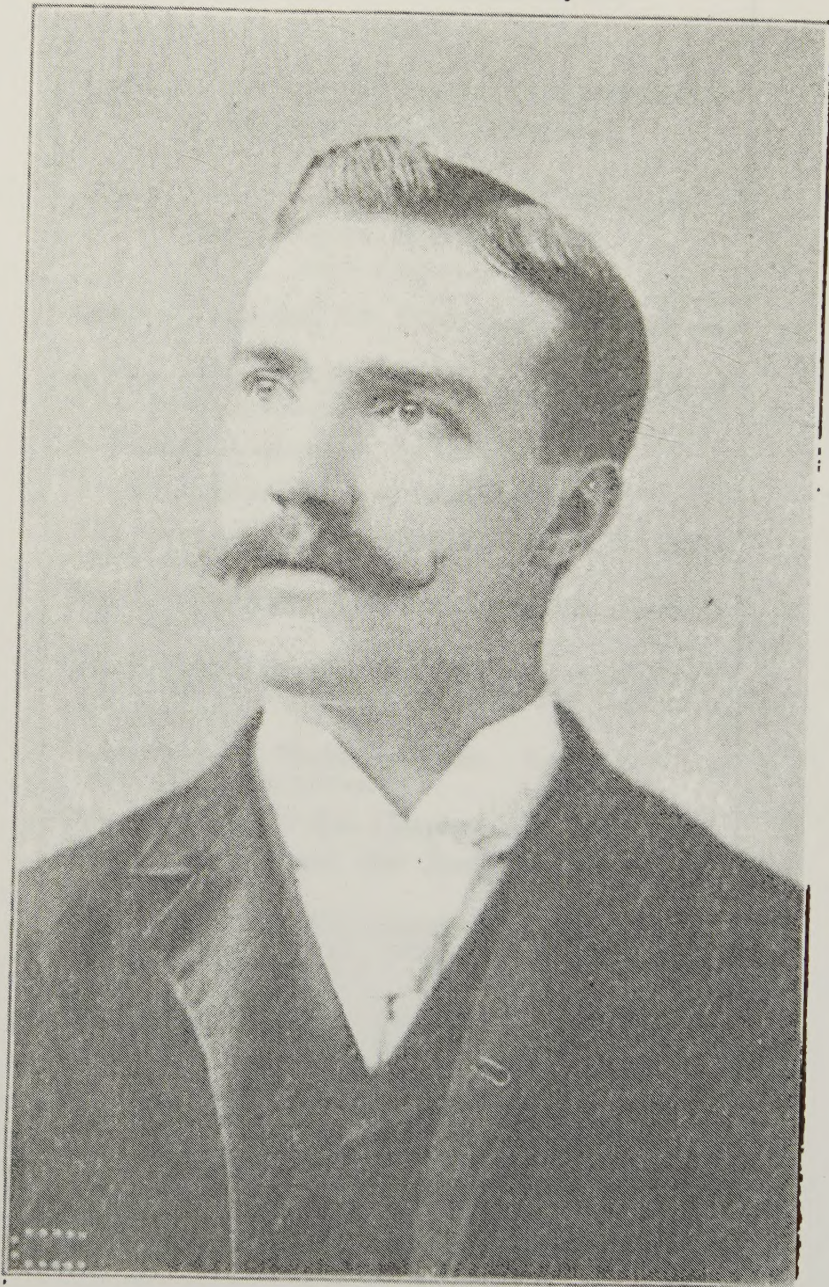
1933-1934

1935-1936

1937-1938

1939-1940

1941-1942
1943-1944
1945-1946
1947-1948
1949-1950



I am, my very dear Lear
Yours most sincerely
Frank

Did the Pardon Come too Late?

By

Maud B. Booth

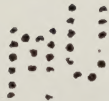
*Author of "The Curse of Septic Soul Treatment,"
"Wanted: Antiseptic Christians," etc.*



New York Toronto Chicago

Fleming H. Revell Company

Publishers of Evangelical Literature



Copyright, 1897, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

THE NEW YORK TYPE-SETTING COMPANY
THE CAXTON PRESS

03/Jan 18 55

Rec 1255. 5-12-55. F.N.

DID THE TAMPON COME TOO
LATE

THEY ARE NOW ALIVE AND ARE BEING
TAKEN CARE OF BY THE AMERICAN
RED CROSS SOCIETY

TO
"MY BOYS"

STILL IN PRISON THIS BRIEF RECORD OF FRANK'S
LIFE, DEATH, AND VICTORY IS
LOVINGLY DEDICATED

317503

SOMETIME

" If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key!
But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loose, may rest,
When we shall clearly see and understand,
I think that we will say, '*God knew best!*'"

M. R. S.

DID THE PARDON COME TOO LATE?

"TAKE me home—please take me home. Don't ask the doctors; they don't understand. I am quite well, and I do *so* want to go; you promised you would take me with you."

I could only answer the pleadings, as I looked at the poor wan face, on which death's shadow could be so plainly read, with the assurance, "Yes, Frank; you shall go home very, very soon now." But as I soothed him off to sleep again my heart ached with the knowledge that he would never see the little white room I had prepared for him, and that it was I who would have to go home alone, after he had gone with the best of all friends, who was coming to fetch him. He was then to be my first "boy" in heaven—the first link in our prison work between the many hearts in prison and the redeemed, white-robed saints in the land of perfect freedom. I could hardly realize it then, and I can hardly realize it now,

that all that is left of him on earth lies beneath the newly made grave, covered with its mantle of spotless snow. *Our* planning had been so different. No thought of death had ever cast a shadow on the bright picture of the future; but right along, all through these months, God had been bringing to a culmination His own purposes, and wonderfully had He been leading by the hand the one whose weary feet were to tread the valley of the shadow.

As the tragedy of his death, just as I had gained for him a pardon, has become a matter of public comment, I have been asked to write a short sketch of his saved life and last hours.

It has all been so sacred and yet so heartrending to me that I feel hardly able to write of it for other eyes; and yet, as he wanted—oh, so much!—to live to help others and to tell others of the blessings God had brought to him through sorrow and suffering in prison, I can but feel he would say, "Give them my messages, that some other hopeless ones may look up and hope."

I will not write of him by his own name, but by the one I always used, which has become dear to me through its association with him.

I met Frank first in Sing Sing on our red-letter day, May 24, 1896. He did not write to me or ask for me, but on my next visit I chanced to speak to him at his cell door; but it was not till the middle of June that we became well acquainted, when he wrote to me and opened his heart about his past and his future. Naturally reserved,—made more so by his education and training as a teacher of others,—it was only little by little, through personal interviews and letters, that I learned to know him.

There was a sad, sin-stained past, over which he mourned with bitter regret; but I, who have had his whole confidence and been his most personal friend, can say without a shadow of doubt that Frank was never a criminal at heart. There was one curse, one blight, to this life of brilliant promise (for he was both talented and educated, possessing gifts and graces that made him specially qualified for a brilliant career), and that was drink.

I do not purpose to speak of his wrong deeds. God has forgiven them, and he, poor boy, has expiated them; and the law should be satisfied, for it has had more than it demanded—his life. I want rather to speak of his changed, redeemed experience.

When I first met him he was just finishing a term in Sing Sing—his first—for an act committed when driven to despair and starving; but I learned that an indictment for a former offense, committed under the influence of drink, hung over him, and that he would be arrested by officers from the State of Maryland on the day of his discharge from Sing Sing.

Unsolicited by him, I took his case in my hands; and being sure that his lesson in Sing Sing had been well learned and that he was a changed man, I tried to save him from extradition to the State of Maryland. I nearly succeeded, but after a day of hard work on the case I found, to my disappointment, that I had undertaken it just too late, both governors having signed the necessary papers, and the detective having started for New York. Instead of being able to take him away from Sing Sing with me on the 10th of August, I had to stand by and see him depart with the detective; but I felt exceedingly hopeful about the case, as I had been given every cause to believe that my late efforts in Baltimore would result in his discharge in a few days. The most lively correspondence was

carried on for some time between my office and those in authority in Baltimore, while friends on the spot represented me, as I could not be present. So near did the State's attorney come to granting my request, which was to cancel the indictment, that a telephone message was sent to Frank at the jail to get ready for the journey to New York; and he waited patiently for the further news, which, alas! did not come, while I waited almost as anxiously at my office for the telegram which was to bring the tidings. When a decision did come at last, it was adverse, and we had to suffer patiently and await God's time. Very bravely was this disappointment borne by the one who was the principal in the whole matter, and my disappointment and impatience were rebuked by his letter, breathing a spirit that showed full well how the influence of Christ was deepening the work of grace every day. He would not have been human had he not felt the disappointment keenly. He wrote as follows:

"I, too, feel very much upset. I think I can afford to be after Saturday. It was rather too bad to telephone and ask me if I had enough money to go to New York, and to be told to get

dressed, as the officials expected my release any moment, and then quietly leave me until noon on Tuesday before I heard anything further. . . . I have waited rather impatiently all day, in the hope that I should be able to answer your little note in person; by now all hopes are gone for to-day, and so I must trouble you with another letter. I did not sleep much Saturday and Sunday nights; I was longing too ardently for Monday to come; and now Monday evening is here, and still I am in Baltimore! Oh, how gladly and willingly would I hurry *home* if they would only let me! But never mind; it is no use worrying; it will not come any sooner. This morning I opened my precious little 'Day Book' and read: 'He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the *prisoner*.' 'When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.' 'In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them.' The 'Day Book' has been a constant source of comfort to me. I am so thankful to you for sending it to me. Every day it seems more and more fitted to meet my wants and to help me to bear the troubles and trials I have to meet.

"I am so sorry to have to disappoint you so much. How gladly would I have spent my Sunday with you if it had been possible! I was expecting and looking forward to it quite as much as you were. You know how much it would be to me only by judging from letters and words and by your own motherly love; but I have been waiting and waiting so very long, and you have made my thoughts of home-coming so sweet; it always comes to me as the place 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.' What does this delay mean? Surely, from what happened on Saturday and from your letters, there was some decision arrived at. If they would only tell me I could be more patient; but to be looking and expecting every hour that freedom is at hand, and then to find it go by and not a word of reason, tends to make the suspense almost unbearable. But I do not want you to think I am seriously worrying. In my heart I am really leaving it all in God's hands, and praying constantly for His help and strength, knowing that He is with me, helping me every hour of the day; and I know that in His own time, when it is best, all will come right. 'All things work together for good to them that love God.'"

The case was to come to court, and hearing that a long sentence was probable, I went to Baltimore again, this time to plead with the judge. He listened courteously to what I had to say, saw quickly the merits of the case, and was merciful, inflicting but a short sentence, for which we were grateful—though, had he known it was to prove a death-sentence, I am sure he would never have spoken it.

One more effort was to come, and that I felt sure would be crowned with success. State's attorney and judge had done their duty in the eyes of the law; now it lay in the power of the chief executive of the State to listen to the plea the law would not recognize, and to show mercy, which is often the truer justice.

My Californian trip caused delay, so it was not till the 5th of December that I found myself in the executive chamber at Annapolis, making the last plea and rejoicing over the victory. The one for whose liberty I had struggled for six months was to be pardoned, and, all well, that pardon would take effect on the day I should return from Chicago. How gladly did I hasten to the hospital of the city jail, where Frank was in charge,

having been given the position of nurse, to tell him the good news; and I shall never forget the glad light that shone in his clear blue eyes as he looked the much he could not speak for thankfulness. Once more all was prepared for his home-coming, while details and necessary arrangements were discussed on paper, and Mr. Cassard, our mutual friend, undertook final arrangements. I was all the more glad that the long waiting time was over, for Frank had been much weakened by a severe attack of the grippe, and the strain of anxiety had told much upon him.

On the day I left for Chicago came a letter in pencil, because he said he was too nervous to control his hand, begging me to take care of myself, and speaking with joy of the home-coming, to which, he said, he was counting the days, and adding that the doctor had a contract to get him quite well and strong enough for any work by the 16th, and that, in his opinion, I was the one who needed rest, while *he* would be perfectly well able to plunge into the work at once. During the few days I was in Chicago no letter came in the well-known handwriting; but it did not cause

me anxiety, as I presumed he concluded it was not worth while to write, as we should so soon meet. When my heavy course of meetings was over I took the Baltimore and Ohio from Chicago, as we had determined to pass through Baltimore, where Frank was to join us. Toward evening an anxious restlessness took possession of me, for which I could not quite account, and I telegraphed to our lawyer to ask if the pardon was signed. The answer came back that it was not, but would be shortly.

All that night I tossed and turned, dreaming fitfully that I was working and pleading and trying to avert some evil, I knew not what; and through the same long hours in suffering and delirium Frank's strength was ebbing away, and the shadow of the approaching end was hastening with more rapid strides than the coming pardon and freedom. When our train reached Washington the next morning we scanned eagerly the Baltimore papers, and there was the good news we sought: the pardon was granted, and the papers further announced that he was going to New York that day.

Less than two hours later our train steamed

into Mount Royal depot, and we eagerly looked for the one who had been so much in our thoughts; but only our dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Cassard, met the train, and then for the first time I heard of his sudden illness, and that, though the pardon was signed, he was too ill to travel. The disappointment was so sudden that I could not realize it, and never for a moment did I grasp ALL it meant. Only a minute's stop and our train bore us away; but before we were out of the city I felt I *must* go back. The conductor could not stop the train, and, to my distress, I had to wait until we reached Wilmington, while every moment the feeling that I must return with the least possible delay grew stronger. Leaving my secretary to return to New York and explain matters to the Commander, I took the express back to Baltimore. Sitting alone by the window, looking out upon the wintry country, a chill feeling of foreboding crept into my heart. Could it be that the pardon had come too late? As we drew nearer the city the mass of clouds that hung over it glowed out amid the purple shadows in a dull red sunset, and somehow that sunset seemed to say to me, "The end has nearly come,

but it is very different from that of your planning. He will soon be home, but it will be a passing through the portals of gold." I could hardly wait for the train to stop and slow up, and when I did find myself in the depot, it was to be met by Mrs. Cassard, who, with her husband, had proved so practical and untiring in her friendship for Frank.

Then I learned how he had been taken sick again about the 10th or 11th; how that noon the pardon had been taken to him, and they had found him delirious, though he had recognized Mr. Cassard and had read the pardon all through himself. Now he was being carried from the jail to the hospital, so we hurried there, reaching his bedside shortly after his arrival. One look at his face told me that which the doctors later reiterated one after another—*God* was going to claim him. All His teachings, all His leadings, had been preparing him for this end, and the pardon I had sought so long had but given him the chance to die a free man.

He knew me the moment I entered the room, and knew me always all through those long hours, however weak or however delirious, clinging to me with a loving trust and gratitude that only

made my helplessness to help him harder to bear. All that night I sat with him, trying to soothe him, and he would turn again and again and whisper, "Oh, it's so good to have you near me; it's so good to have you comforting me!" I have never found a heart more appreciative or one more sensitive to sympathy, rarely one more thoughtful of others and oblivious of self.

Those long, quiet hours alone with my dying friend will live in my memory forever. The shaded light, the moonbeams through the window, the sound of some late carriage rolling home, and ever and anon the tolling of a bell—every little detail of it is indelibly written in my mind. For several hours Frank *would* sing. He had been a chorister in boyhood and sung in choirs in manhood, and in delirium his mind reverted naturally to music. Anthem after anthem he sang, and once, clearly and distinctly, "The Lost Chord." I would check him, and he would smilingly promise to "be good and go right to sleep"; but in a few moments he would sing again, until I told him he must let *me* sing while he rested. Then I sang over and over again, while he lay back restfully:

“ Oh, what a Redeemer is Jesus my Saviour,
 Forgiving my sins and bearing all my woe!
 Oh, what a Redeemer is Jesus my Saviour,
 Proclaiming my liberty and washing me white as snow! ”

My voice, never good for much, was hopelessly weak; but he could hear the words, and such a bright light shone on his face as he said, “ Oh, that is lovely! Jesus *my* Saviour, *my* Saviour!” I asked, “ Do you feel Him very near and precious just now? ” and he answered, “ Oh yes; *so* precious and *so* near me! I don’t know what I should have done without Him. He is so near me all the time.” And then he murmured over and over again, “ Jesus MY Saviour!” A few minutes later he said, “ You must pray with me; I can’t pray now.” So I prayed, but directly I had finished he began pouring out his soul to God in fervent pleadings. I cannot write all he said, but it was the prayer of a heart that KNEW in whom he had believed, and the poor thin hands clasped mine as I knelt beside him. “ O Lord, do help me, do hold me, do be with me. Thou knowest how much I need Thee. Do help me to show to all the world how much Thou hast helped me, and give me power to live and help others and to show them how truly I am Thine.”

And a minute or two later he was pleading: "O Lord, help me never to disappoint them, never to do anything that would dishonor Thee." At last I stopped him, saying, "You are too weak to pray longer, Frank. The dear Lord knows all about it, and He will understand. Now I want you to try and sleep." He turned with one of the smiles that so constantly lighted his face, and said: "Yes; I'll be good and go right to sleep; but you'll never, never know what prayer has been to me. I have just prayed and prayed and prayed all through the suffering of these last weeks. When you first came to Sing Sing I didn't pray; I thought praying was all a sentiment, and I couldn't pray; but since you have come into my life I have learned how to pray, and praying has become so easy that it has been, oh, such a comfort to me!" Then he laid his head back and with a smile on his face slept peacefully for a few moments. In his delirium he would constantly forget where he was, and his mind would revert to the bitter past. Time and time again he would talk as though he were still in jail, or even repeat his cell number in Sing Sing, saying over several times the name he had

passed under, adding to it, with a tone of bitterness in his voice, the word "convict," showing how sensitive he was to the iron of shame that had burned itself into his soul. My intimate knowledge of the past enabled me to detect in a moment allusions that showed what was troubling him, and at such times I could always rouse him and chase the sad past by the assurance that it was all over forever, that the pardon had really come, and that he was a free man.

I was so very thankful to God that through all this delirium and weakness he always knew my voice in a moment and recognized my face or the touch of my hand, so that I could bring him back from the distressed wanderings to the realization of better, gladder things.

At midnight the doctor had told me he could not last an hour, but his wonderful vitality made the battle between life and death a long one. Toward morning his temperature was a little lower and his pulse stronger, and he had slept several times for twenty minutes or a half-hour, while I held his hand and kept my other hand upon his head; but if I moved he became restless at once. Once the doctor begged me to go and rest, fear-

ing that I should be overtaxed; and in a moment Frank turned anxiously and expressed much concern at my looking weary. He never seemed for one moment to forget others, but would often forget himself in anxiety lest others were weary or inconvenienced or annoyed. All through the next day we watched, expecting the end any moment. I slept for two hours in the afternoon, and on my return I could see the shadows deepening, but the bright, loving welcome he gave me showed still how the grateful heart could clear the clouds from the weary mind.

As I took my place by his side again he scanned my face very anxiously. I suppose sorrow and anxiety were written there, for he had evidently read something that had troubled him. "You are worried over something," he whispered. "What is it?" And then, taking my face tenderly between his hands and looking long into my eyes, he called me by a name he had never used before, and said tenderly, "Little mother, I'm afraid you are sick. You mustn't look sick and worried." A little later he made his last appeal for me to take him "home," adding, "Isn't it good to feel I *have* a home—a home

of my own at last to go to!" And I could only assure him, amid my tears, that he was very near home, and that all the weary waiting would soon be ended.

Mrs. Cassard took me away at six o'clock, and during my short absence Mr. Cassard took my place; and he told me afterward that Frank repeated the whole of the Twenty-third Psalm after him in a clear, distinct voice, going back of his own accord to the passage, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me," which was the first intimation we had that he fully realized what was coming to him.

When I returned to his side I sang two verses of the hymn, "Blessed Lord, in Thee is refuge;" and he sang the alto with me clearly and correctly, with such a satisfied look on his face and such earnestness, specially marking the words

"Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Teach me on Thy arm to lean."

When Mr. and Mrs. Cassard returned he was sinking fast; and as we stood together at his side we felt pitifully helpless to help him in the last hard struggle, in the darkness preceding the dawn

of the perfect day. We felt that we could go but a little farther with him to the earth limit of the valley, which was nearly reached now, and then we should have to turn back alone and take up life's battle again, while he would pass out into perfect freedom and into the glory of Christ's presence. As I sat holding his cold hand, scene after scene rose up before me. First, our talk together when a cell door was between us. Then his face as he sat in our first League meeting in the chapel, on the 9th of August, singing so heartily and listening so eagerly to the plans for the future of our prison work. Then came the recollection of the hour when he was leaving Sing Sing, when he gave me his message for his mother, with his lip quivering and his eyes full of tears: "Tell her that at last her many prayers have been heard and answered." Then I saw once more the scene within the little hospital of the Baltimore jail, and the bright, eager face, somewhat pale from the three weeks' illness, but so hopeful and happy. And then I looked out at all the fallen, shattered castles we had been building for the future,—the glad home-coming, the work mapped out, and the bright hopes of retrieving the past,—and as

I bowed my head on the bed and prayed, I could only say, with a cry to God to feel it so, the words of one of his last letters: "And then you will know that whatever happens is the best, for God is watching over this thing, and we cannot do anything to interfere with His plans."

His last conscious moments were about two hours before he died. The great restlessness of the weary body and wandering mind had been growing more and more painful every moment, when he roused himself and begged for light. The shade was removed from the gas and it was turned up to its fullest extent; but still he said pitifully, "I cannot see; it's so dark." And we knew the eyes that looked into ours, still so clear and bright, had lost their sight for all earthly things. He seemed troubled and seemed to think he was alone in the dark; so I called to him and tried to reassure him, and he answered, "Yes, I know your voice, but I cannot find you; you're so far away and it's so dark." I took the hands that had freed themselves from our clasp and were searching, and guided them to my arm, which he grasped eagerly, saying, "Yes, now I feel you and I hear you; but I cannot see

you." We assured him we were close by him and that light was coming very, very soon—that Jesus Himself would bring the light. "When?" he murmured. "It is so hard and so long." And we could only answer, "Very, very soon, dear; all will be bright and you will be home." And then our watching hearts cried out, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus." But still He tarried, for it was not until one o'clock in the morning that the golden gates swung open and our Frank passed into the light and glory of the eternal day.

I can never make others know him as I had learned to know him through these long and anxious months, but a few extracts from some of his letters to me will speak far more loudly than my words could, of the deep, blessed work of God in his heart, and of the brave, sweet spirit that longed so to prove itself worthy of the Lord it owned.

Just before I left for California he sent me a selection of passages of promise and comfort, and wrote a deep expression of his gratitude for the little I had been able to do for him:

"How I wish I could be near you to wish you all the blessings possible on your way! There will be many to see you, many to wish you God-

speed and to shake your hand, but there will be none more thankful than I am that you came into their lives and brought so much of joy, comfort, and peace. God bless you, my dear leader, for all you have done for me. You found me lonely, forsaken, without a friend who could help me, and in prison, with the certainty of staying there. You leave me for a little while, still in prison, it is true, but, oh, how very, very different to the way you found me! Forsaken, you brought me a warm-hearted friendship, took me by the hand, and made me your friend, taking charge of my welfare, my hopes, my future, my soul, dispersed the clouds and brought joy and sunshine into my life, even made me feel that I could come to you with all my troubles and you were always ready to listen. To my loneliness you have brought a constant relief, for I can always sit down when most alone and talk to you, knowing full well that you are always ready to listen. You have brought a great joy into my life and made the future full of hope and brightness; for I think I can see something of the joy and gladness of working for the cause which you represent. Numberless other reasons I have for being thankful to you:

your care and interest for my mother, the work you have done for me, the constant sacrifice of self in my behalf, all come to me over and over again, to drive away the sense of loneliness and to fill me with a deep knowledge of the value of your friendship. Surely God sent you to me; you were the answer to my mother's prayers. . . . God bless you and go with you all the way, and bring you home again in joy and peace, give you a thousand blessings to cheer your way, send you words to say, and give you a great power over sin and trouble; and amid all the darkness which you daily lighten, may you be like Goldsmith's minister:

and 'A man to all the country *dear*,'

'Like some tall cliff that lifts its form,
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.' "

My answer from the far West brought forth the following paragraph in a subsequent letter:

"There is just one phrase in your letter that I will write of now. You tell me not to forget that you are only the messenger and that I owe all to the dear Lord. No and yes! Yes, I owe *all* to

the Lord, and I have and do continually thank Him, and most of all for sending you to me; and I shall be very, very happy when I can thank Him *with you* for all He has done. But 'only a messenger'—no! you have been far more than a messenger, and as such I am not going to be scolded for offering some thankfulness to you. Messengers come and deliver their message, and that is the end of their service usually. But you have been a friend; you have taken me by the hand and kept the remembrance of troubles in your own heart; you have tried to make my burdens yours—nay, you have taken my burdens on your own shoulders and carried them for me; you have stayed with me when every one had left me; you have been my champion when all who should know me were against me. God put it into your heart. . . . I am not going to look on you 'only as a messenger' unless you let me make my own definition of a messenger."

His was one of the most grateful hearts I have ever met, and I constantly found him taking comfort in, pouring out thanks for, some little service that others would have accepted without notice.

Writing on the comfort God was constantly

bringing to him through a special passage of Scripture, he says:

"God seems to have specially chosen out one text to be a constant source of comfort to me. I found it in the 'Day Book' on August 14th; it came to me when I was writing those notes for you; you gave it to me in one of your letters; one day I picked up the 'Sun' and found a sermon by Mr. Sam Jones from the same text; and now last night Mr. Cassard sends me the very same text and a complete sermon by Talmage from it also. Is not this sufficient evidence that God has sent all these things to tell me specially that He is watching over me? You know the text: 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' How true it has been in my case! Ever since I could say and was *conscious* of the fact that *I loved* God (not simply believed Him; I never doubted Him), I have also been constantly finding something to be thankful for. He is always showing me that I am in His hands and that He is caring for me. It is a great source of comfort, for what at first seems to be a trouble and a hardship turns out to be a blessing. With me, however, since God sent

you and you took me in hand, the troubles I expected have almost vanished, and those that remain have been made easy and a fitting ground for future work."

After opening his heart very freely about the loss of one on whose help he had counted, he says :

"Well, let it be so ; I can face it alone. No, not alone. I have One to help me and carry the burden for me. Then, also, I know you will help me, and you will be even a greater help than you can think ; for you have been the means of bringing comfort when I was most forsaken and most needed it. It is a marvel to me that you have had so much influence over me. I do not easily make friends ; I am usually very reserved and difficult of approach ; and yet you seem to have found your way into my heart and opened up all my secrets with a touch. *God sent you*, and God will bless you and answer your prayers."

In answering a long letter, in which I had written him much regarding my hopes for his spiritual life, he says :

"My dear Mrs. Booth, I scarcely know how to answer the last part of your letter, and yet I feel

that I ought to write of it. I think I fully realize all you mean by getting nearer to our dear Saviour every day. You mean that I should constantly become more and more aware of His guiding and controlling power; that I should gradually come more to feel that He is necessary to me every hour of the day, and also that I should learn to thank Him more for all He is constantly doing for me. All this I *am* trying hard to attain to. I know it is not *all* to simply accept. I am more and more getting face to face with the strength and grace I need, and I think I know what your estimate of 'true and worthy' means. You look for far more than simple success in life; you expect far more than a mere negative goodness, which amounts simply to not doing that which is wrong. I know you are looking forward to a future for me which is full of 'hopes and bright expectations,' and I often wonder if I am really capable of realizing all you expect of me. You say I '*must* fulfil them all.' God grant that I may. No one could possibly have a greater longing to do so than I have. If it could be accomplished by one act, such as literally 'cutting off the hand' or 'plucking out the eye,' I could

succeed; but moral stability and that growth in Christlikeness which is the essential of your 'hopes' lie within a circle of mysterious power, to which such acts are inapplicable. Oh, how my heart would rejoice if I could see and know that *all* your desires will be fulfilled! How I should hasten to bring you the happiness! Perhaps I *may* even reach such a position that I shall *know* I am safe from all temptation. If longing, praying, earnest seeking, constant watchfulness, and a long and severe preparation will accomplish it, it will be done. God has promised to take away the old heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh, and I believe these earnest longings for good and right are the offspring of such a regeneration. If prayers—my own, yours, and my mother's—will accomplish it, it will be done. I know how you will help me, for I believe your help is born of a strong, deep love for my soul's welfare. God bless you abundantly for it, and may all your wishes and hopes and prayers on my behalf be more than answered. I can only say I will try; it is not much, but it means more, far more, than I can tell you in words. It means days and nights of earnest prayer; it means many a heart-

ache and bitter tear for the wrong of the past; and it also means a growing peace within and a feeling of joy for all the manifestations of God's care and presence."

During his stay in the jail he had charge of the hospital, and had at one time several very sick patients, with whom he sat up many nights. After writing of the strain he has been under, Frank adds in one of his letters:

"But still, with it all, I am better in health than when I came here. I am not worrying, and you have been such a help and blessing to me. Your letters have taught me more and more how to find strength and comfort, and I never have to ask in vain. I go to my God oftener, and He always fills me with a peace which I cannot describe."

Again, speaking of his heart experience, he writes:

"I was very pleased with the 'Gazette'; it is always good. That short poem on page 2, 'He Careth,' was especially welcome. It is so simple and yet so perfect; it answers one's needs and longings. It ought to prove a blessing to many hearts in Sing Sing.

‘ He comforts me in the gloom of night;
 He lifts the burden, for He is strong;
 He stills the sighs and awakens the song;
 The sorrows that bowed me down He bears,
 And loves and pardons, because He cares.’

I can remember the time when I should have read this over and perfectly agreed with each assertion without any real feeling in the matter. Its beauty would probably have impressed me, but that would have been *all*. Now every line has a deep, satisfying reality about it to me. I have gone through it all and *known* the truth of it. I have *felt* the comfort, the love, the pardon; I *know* what it is to have the burden lifted, and I know He *cares*. My sighs have been stilled many a time, and a bright, glad joy has crept into my heart from the knowledge that One so strong was with me every hour.”

Patient as Frank was, and happy as the Lord’s peace made him, he still longed for freedom with an intense longing. Speaking in a letter of some plans I had written him for the future, he wrote:

“ My dear leader, you are continually making liberty more dear to me. It will be like going from the darkest earth to what we picture the brightest heaven to be.”

In another letter on the same subject he writes :

“ I have been here two months, and one month of my sentence has gone by to-day. Only nine months more. It seems quite a short time by the side of Sing Sing sentences. The ‘Day Book’ for to-day says that ‘trouble is near,’ but it tells us very plainly how to meet trouble. I expect all the trouble will vanish very easily if we look at it through the right eyes. ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.’ I stood at the window very early this morning, waiting for daylight, and as the shadows gradually passed away and the sun melted the blackness, I could not help but wish for *liberty*. It seemed so beautiful out there in the air, with the clear sky, the cold, fresh air, the space. It seemed so very near and yet so unattainable. Will it come? Shall I soon be able to choose my own path? Yet I have learned that it is better to let God choose it for me. He saw it best; for my own sin and folly had led me very, very far from Him, and it seemed the only way to bring me back, and so He has caused my eyes to be opened, and in His own good time He will also deliver me. ‘He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him.’ I

would not have it otherwise, for without Him I have found that all goes wrong, and with Him even the most unfavorable surroundings may be peaceful and quiet and full of satisfaction. But still I long to be active, to be out, to have some better companionship. Sometimes it grows very lonely here—when I get tired of writing and reading, and want to talk, and I have no one whom I can talk to. I am looking forward eagerly to your return. It will be so different to know you are in New York, though that is far enough away. Then, if your efforts are successful and you are able to get my release, I think I shall be the happiest man in the Union!”

Yet again he reverts in a letter to this topic, to which his mind turned often :

“ It is the 1st of the month to-day, and before the 1st of next month we shall know all about it. I often wonder whether you can really grasp all *that* means to me. Sometimes I think you do, because you so easily find your way into our hearts and so frequently anticipate our wants; and yet it seems impossible to fully understand all it means, without going through it. Sometimes I feel as though I would willingly give ten years

of my life if I could only *now*, at this moment, be outside of walls. Nothing but walls and bars! Surely the man did not know what he was talking about when he said:

‘ Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.’

They make the most palpable prison to the body, at any rate. The mind and soul may soar beyond them, but they are compelled to come back; and even with the most patient and bright of dispositions the imprisonment of the body must, in time, dull and deaden the mind. It is so difficult to be cheerful all the time. One of the texts in the ‘ Day Book ’ has been ringing in my ears for two days now—the one for the evening of October 29th: ‘ David *encouraged* himself in the Lord his God.’ And the last verse for the same day often comes into my mind, because the words are those of a very grand anthem which I helped to sing many, many times. I never see these words—and they have occurred over and over again in the ‘ Day Book ’—without the music coming back to me and running on, chord after chord, through my mind: ‘ O taste and see how gracious the Lord is: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

. . . The lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that fear the Lord lack no good thing.' In the anthem the latter part is sung in response. The basses begin, 'The lions do lack, and suffer hunger,' and the soft voices of the tenors come in, 'But they that fear the Lord;' and then in a grand finale they all join together with full organ, repeating the whole thing. No; stone walls cannot imprison the mind, thank God; the good of the past comes back to us even here. I often dream of the time when I was a choir-boy. I often feel now like one of the lions—suffering hunger of mind and soul, oh, so very, very much, for the time when He will bring me 'forth also into a large place.' Then your words come back to me, over and over again, from your letters: 'Keep a brave heart; all will be well; you are in God's hands, and He will not let you suffer more than you can well and bravely bear.' "

Despite all this eager longing for freedom, there was a sweet patience and courage and an anxiety to prepare me for possible disappointment when I should take the case to the Governor. He was always so thoughtful for me and so keenly appreciated what I had tried to do for him. He writes:

"You know how earnestly I shall pray that God will bless your efforts with the Governor. It is all in His hands, and He will do what seemeth Him good ; but, whatever the result, I shall never be able to repay you for all you have done for me. I know it will be very disappointing if the Governor refuses to interfere, and I shall want to see you then even more, if that were possible, to thank you for your great kindness and to comfort you as best I can for your part of the disappointment."

In a later letter, written in pencil because of the weakness following a severe attack of the grippe, he says :

"I feel confident that all will be well, because I have a deep conviction that a higher power than ours has seen fit to make an end of this waiting and suffering ; and I also have a satisfactory consciousness that God is going to open up a way for me whereby I may live a life of usefulness and blessing to myself and to others. Never before in my life have I felt this. Now all seems clear, and I believe the way will be straight, because He will guide me by the hand."

Just after Thanksgiving he wrote of all the

many things he had to be grateful for,—improved health, the warden's and doctor's kindness to him, and Mr. Cassard's friendship,—and then adds :

“ But all these blessings have been nothing to my spiritual blessings. On Thursday I allowed myself the privilege of reading a little, and I read all the back days of my ‘ Day Book,’ and found all that had been written to comfort and cheer me while I was sick. You say in your last letter that you may be in Annapolis next Saturday, the 5th of December. I could not help looking at the ‘ Day Book ’ for that day, and I found something which brought the tears into my eyes—tears of joy for the assurance that God is watching over me and going with me all the way. I cannot write it all, but every word is applicable to the occasion, and it gave me so much comfort and peace ; and I am fully prepared now for the best—I mean *God's best*; because if I come out I shall know that my ‘ forty years of wandering are over, and that He has brought me safe into His place,’ or if I have to stay I shall know there is something more for me to learn, and I shall set about to try and find what it is. Now you must go to Annapolis with these thoughts in your

mind, and then you will know that whatever happens is *the best*; for God is watching over this thing, and we cannot do anything to interfere with His plans. I know you will try hard, but don't be disappointed."

I carried the letter in my pocket on the day I made my request to Governor Loundes, feeling that, should I fail, it would comfort me as nothing else could.

On referring to the 'Day Book' for that day, I find among the verses that brought Frank such comfort: "We suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Little did we realize then that the gold of this heart was so soon to shine forth in the glory of the eternal morning, after the last trial of stern suffering. The evening of the day that I had taken him the glad news from Annapolis he sent me the following hurried line:

"It scarcely seems possible that your visit to-day is a reality; it all seems like a dream, and yet

the dream is a glorious reality if I can only realize it. It seems so impossible that the end is so soon to come; it seems so impossible that at last I am to have liberty; and yet I suppose it will come. I know I realize it this much, that it has taken a heavy load off my mind, and I feel thankful and joyous and happy. I shall go to bed to-night counting the days; they will soon pass by. Oh, how very, very much I owe you! When I look back to the time when I met you in Sing Sing, and think of the position I was in then, of the danger I have been in and passed through, of all you have done to bring me out of it, and the final position now, I know I shall never be able to thank you sufficiently for all you have done. But when I am free I will find some way to show you how much I appreciate all you have done. It has been a hard-fought battle, but victory has come at last, and we shall soon be able to rejoice in it. Then the first thing to do is to set to work to show others that some good can come from the lessons learned in prison. It will not be long now; only a few more days and all will be well."

Three days later he wrote the following to Mr. Cassard:

"DEAR MR. CASSARD: I know you have rejoiced with me over the victory Mrs. Booth has achieved, and that you are awaiting the coming of the 16th almost as anxiously as I am. But of course you can only form a very limited idea of what it all means to me, after more than two long years of waiting, with all the suspense, the danger, and the dreadful uncertainty that I have experienced. I could honestly say to-day, even if I had no other reason, no deep, earnest desire to do right for right's sake and for the fact that a loving, sympathetic power has come into my life to help me and keep me, I could truly say that no possibilities of the greatest wealth or the prevention of the direst starvation would ever again tempt me to run the risk of going through what I have suffered. To the occasional visitor jail or prison may seem bearable, and even to some almost a place of passable comfort; but to a man of feeling, of energy, of susceptibility, it is a veritable hell. I have learned my lesson. It has been a bitter, hard experience, but, thank God, it is now almost over, and I shall soon be able to look back to it, and look forward to a better life, purer and richer because it will be

doubly blessed, blessing both me and those around me with whom I come in contact.

"There is one thing that gives me more comfort and peace than I can explain, and that is the way in which God has so plainly shown me that He has been leading me all the way through this trouble. I have constantly felt that He has had me by the hand and has led me through it all, and that on all occasions, when the anxiety was greatest or the trouble seemed heaviest, He has shown me that He was leading me through His own way and that in His own good time He would make an end. And the end, I feel confident, will soon be here, because I thoroughly believe that His hand is guiding and leading me. The 'Day Book' for December 5th says: 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes.' And lower down: 'Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no;' and, 'He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.'

God grant that all the gold may show itself in the future."

His constant references to the 'Day Book' show clearly how often it brought to him a message which seemed to come straight to his heart from the dear Lord he trusted so fully. One remarkable coincidence in connection with the little book struck me very forcibly the night of his death. He told me that for several days before his pardon came he had been too sick to read it; so I turned to the little volume, which was found in his coat pocket, to see which were the last portions given to him, and the marker showed them to be these: "The spirit shall return unto God who gave it." "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. . . . We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord," "with Christ; which is far better." "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Did Frank realize, as he closed his beloved little book for the last time, that this message, too, was meant directly for him, and that Another, greater than his earthly friends, had prepared the home to which he was to go, and that his Saviour was coming very shortly to receive him unto Himself?

What more can I add? As I turn over his letters I find many, many more full of sweet hope and holy resolve—letters that speak of his struggles and victories, his hopes and plans; but those who have read this brief sketch have seen enough into the heart experience of our Frank to know how truly Christ can save and keep the heart that turns in its desperate need to Him; so I tie up the letters and seal them away among my treasures.

The extracts I have taken from his private correspondence would never have been given to the public (for such letters I hold very sacred), were it not that I longed that his great wish to help and bless *others* should be fulfilled, and that he might speak, through his written words, to the world from which his redeemed spirit has passed to the perfect freedom and victory of the home
“where the weary are at rest.”

DEC 31 1917

Bay State College Library



30009908

BV4465
B6

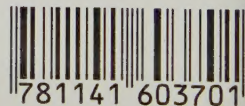
BV4465
B6

Booth, Maud Ballin
Did the pardon
come too late?

DATE

ISSUED TO

GAYLORD



9



781141 603701